Prepping for an Internship

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“March Term” Intern Series: Part of Grad Global Impact (GGI)

I) Prepping for an Internship
II) Managing Up/Down/Around
III) Your Professional Identity
IV) Following up on an Internship
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I) Prepping for an Internship
II) Managing Up/Down/Around
III) Your Professional Identity
IV) Following up on an Internship
What Are You Hoping to Get Out of This Week?
Prepping for an Internship

I) Setting Goals
II) Setting Expectations
III) Setting the Stage
IV) Day One / Week One
Prepping for an Internship

I) Setting Goals
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IV) Day One / Week One
a) An Internship Is/Isn’t
a) An Internship Is...

- Above all: training
- A chance to contribute to projects that you can translate into future job applications
- An opportunity to learn about whether you like or dislike an industry or an organization
- A 10-week (most of the time) long span of time during which you can network with just about anyone in an organization.
- ...but it’s also a chance to cultivate your professional identity and show that you have discretion.
a) An Internship Isn’t

- A guarantee of full-time employment
- Lowly work (don’t do the dry cleaning)
- An end point
- ...or your last job
- ...or your only opportunity to impress people ever
- ...and as an intern, you aren’t the person whose “other duties as assigned” category grows and grows.
Have a plan.
b) Map Out Your Weeks

- Weeks 1-3
  - Acclimate and meet
  - Ask questions and take notes
  - How can you contribute?

- Weeks 4-6
  - Identify a mentor or two
  - Informal coffee chats
  - Check in with supervisor

- Weeks 7-10
  - Finalize project(s)
  - Identify next steps
What do you hope to accomplish?
You are a colleague, not “the intern.”
An offer of full time work isn’t always everything!
Prepping for an Internship

I) Setting Goals

II) Setting Expectations

III) Setting the Stage

IV) Day One / Week One
a) Office Etiquette
a) Office Etiquette

- What is “company culture”

- Attire
  - Clear up any questions beforehand
  - Remember that attire is about fit and not dollars
  - Beware “jeans Friday”
  - Simple is usually better (especially at first)

- Office hours and expectations on arrival and departure

- Use of common spaces

- Socialization, lunch norms

- Use of chat / email / phone / “pop-in”
b) Who’s the Boss?
b) Who’s the Boss?

- When do you do your check-ins?
- How will you be evaluated?
- What is your supervisor’s preferred means of communication?
- Don’t be tricked by informality at the start
- Keep your supervisor in the loop about progress toward completion of any project
- Make sure to track your activities and deliverables so that you have something to share at the end of the internship
c) Who are YOU?
c) Who are YOU?

- Is your internship description clear?
- What is your agenda?
- Ask how this internship fits into your goals
- What new skills do you want to learn?
- Be reasonable with yourself
Prepping for an Internship

I) Setting Goals
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WHAT WOULD YOU SAY...
YOU DO HERE!?
a) Know the Mission

- What they do
- What the structure is
- Who they serve
- Who their competitors are (you can talk with alumni at competitors...)
- When were they last in the news?
- What causes do they support?
- What are the resources available to you?
b) Shop...frugally
b) Shop...frugally

**MEN**
- Neutral color suit
- Blazers can work
- Tame the beard
- New leather shoes
- New belt

**WOMEN**
- Neutral color suit
- A simple pattern or color “pop”
- Simple jewelry is okay
- Pants or skirt are both acceptable
- Heels based on comfort

**EVERYONE**
- Fit, not fashion
- Fresh haircut
- Wear it all first
- Ask for honesty
- Get it tailored!

**ACCESSORIES**
- Valise, not backpack
- Metal, not plastic water bottle
- Pens you like to use
- Leather padfolio for CV’s
- Notebook

- Remember that it will be **summer**
- Comfortable beats chic for a commute
- No one was ever fired for wearing sneakers on the train
Fast fashion: friend and foe.
Prepping for an Internship

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IV) Day One / Week One
a) Day One

- Make sure you get on the right schedule 1 week early
- Arrive 10 minutes early and relax
- Typically orientation and training, maybe lunch
- Write down names as you meet people
- Collect business cards of everyone if possible
- Practice your elevator speech and get ready to deploy it a hundred times
- Set up an email signature
- Resist the urge to stay too late
b) Week One

- Two ears, one mouth
- Set up regular check-ins
- Try to exercise and decompress after work—do something FOR YOURSELF to start each day.
- Figure out how you want to use the commute
- Take some notes at the end of each day and develop habits of mind that will shake the rust off of your way of doing things
- Expect that the pace of work might be very different than graduate school
Questions?
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